

Race from Power: U.S. Foreign Policy and the General Crisis of “White Supremacy”

Explicit doctrines of racial supremacy are in bad odor nowadays, particularly among foreign policy elites; such retrograde ideas are viewed widely as the justly neglected relic of a long-forgotten era. Suggestive of this trend are the critical studies of the “construction of whiteness” that have proliferated of late.¹ Among other things, these studies have asked a quite profound question: how was it that those who had warred on the shores of Europe – English versus Irish, French versus German, Russian versus Pole, Serb versus Croat, even Jew versus Gentile – all of a sudden on arriving on these shores were reconstructed as “white” and provided real or imagined privileges based on “white supremacy”?

Some of these studies have noted that in addition to providing a cohesive identity for disparate European immigrants, “whiteness” and “white supremacy” had the added advantage of providing a convenient rationale for seizing the resources and labor of those of a darker hue who were presumed to be “inferior”: that is “race” (“whiteness”) was derived from “power” and, yes, “power” was derived from “race.”

Still, despite the richness of this plethora of studies, few have sought to place the construction of whiteness in the context of U.S. foreign policy – although this global context was highly relevant in this process: minimally, preventing the proliferation of ethnic tensions that had helped to plunge Europe into war

1. Richard Delgado and Jean Stefancic, eds., *Critical White Studies: Looking Behind the Mirror* (Philadelphia, 1997); Michelle Fine, Lois Weis, Linda C. Powell, and L. Mun Wong, eds., *Off White: Readings on Race, Power, and Society* (New York, 1997); Susan Gubar, *Racechanges: White Skin, Black Face in American Culture* (New York, 1997); Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (Cambridge, 1992); Ruth Frankenberg, *White Women, Race Matters: The Social Construction of Whiteness* (Minneapolis, 1993); Joe L. Kincheloe, Shirley R. Steinberg, Nelson M. Rodriguez, and Ronald E. Chennault, eds., *White Reign: Deploying Whiteness in America* (New York, 1998); Mike Hill, ed., *Whiteness: A Critical Reader* (New York, 1997); Ian F. Haney Lopez, *White By Law: The Legal Construction of Race* (New York, 1996); Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (New York, 1993); David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York, 1991); Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York, 1996); Grace Elizabeth Hale, *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890–1940* (New York, 1998); Theodore Allen, *The Invention of the White Race: Volume One: Racial Oppression and Social Control* (New York, 1994); Elvi Whittaker, *The Mainland Haole: The White Experience in Hawaii* (New York, 1986).

so often encouraged the construction of “whiteness” and “white supremacy.” For the most part these studies have not sought to include Africans – as opposed to African Americans – in its comprehension of the construction of “whiteness”; nor have they contemplated that the closing of the frontier in North America and the final defeat of Native Americans led directly to an assault on the “frontier” in Africa. Nor have these studies, broadly speaking, posited Asia – and notably Japan’s rise after its 1905 defeat of Russia – as a central factor in the evolution of “white supremacy.”

Above all, one cannot begin to understand U.S. foreign policy during this century without contemplating race and racism, just as one cannot begin to understand the ebb and flow of race and racism in this nation without contemplating the global context. Indeed, just as some have suggested that “class struggle” is the motive force of history, this insight should be complemented with the idea that relations – or “struggles” – between and among nations is the locomotive of history and, most definitely, is the leading factor determining the advance and retreat of “white supremacy.”

Racial construction has not been a static process. The discrediting of fascism as a result of the Holocaust, the civil rights movement in the United States, and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa were among the epochal events that caused a basic reconsideration of notions of racial supremacy; moreover, the ability of nations as various as Japan and the Soviet Union to transform U.S. tacit or explicit backing for “white supremacy” into a liability for Washington also helped to inspire less overtly racist thinking on these shores.

Nevertheless, during the Cold War era it was often said that U.S. “wars in the Third World were a substitute for a Third World War”: despite the bluster and tension in the Moscow-Washington relationship, the United States did not go to war with the Soviet Union, but instead wreaked havoc on Korea, Vietnam, Grenada, Panama, and Iraq, among other nations. This reality, perhaps, should alert us to the fact that despite official nostrums, disarticulated notions of “white supremacy” did not disappear during the American Century.² Likewise, it is significant that atomic bombs were detonated by the United States in Asia, not Europe.

Yet “white supremacy” – this conception of the virtual divine right of some of European heritage to dominate all others and all else³ – has been far from

2. Of course, “white supremacy” is far from being an exclusively U.S. phenomenon. See, for example, Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895–1930* (Stanford, 1997); Allison Blakely, *Blacks in the Dutch World: The Evolution of Racial Imagery in a Modern Society* (Bloomington, 1993); Frances Twine Winddance, *Racism in a Racial Democracy: The Maintenance of White Supremacy in Brazil* (New Brunswick, 1998); Gretchen Fitzgerald, *Repulsing Racism: Reflections on Racism and the Irish* (Dublin, 1992); Panikos Panayi, ed., *Racial Violence in Britain, 1840–1950* (Leicester, 1993); and Jay Kinsbrunner, *Not of Pure Blood: The Free People of Color and Racial Prejudice in Nineteenth-Century Puerto Rico* (Durham, 1996).

3. See, for example, George Fredrickson, *White Supremacy: A Comparative Study in American and South African History* (New York, 1981); John Cell, *The Highest Stage of White Supremacy: The Origins of Segregation in South Africa and the American South* (New York, 1982); and Clifton C. Crais, *White*

immutable. This doctrine is generally thought to have emerged as a justification for slavery and the slave trade⁴ or as a distorted extension of the Enlightenment,⁵ though stirrings in this direction can be detected as early as the thirteenth century in response to the invasions spearheaded by Genghis Khan and his progeny – which left a deep “psychological impact” on Europe; “gargoyles” were devised to portray images of these “inhabitants of the East” as “monsters and fantastic beings. . . . The arrival of the Mongols in medieval Europe was akin to an invasion of extra-terrestrials.”⁶ The process of creating an “other” was essential to the origins and evolution of “white supremacy.”

Unfortunately, part of the problem with some of the recent writings on “whiteness” and “white supremacy” is their dual fixation on African Americans as the virtual exclusive antipode to “whiteness” – while slighting Asia – and a reluctance to examine the period before the African slave trade in explicating this phenomenon.⁷

W. E. B. Du Bois announced almost one hundred years ago that “the problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line.” Yet, this founder of the NAACP pointedly did not limit this formulation to “black-white” relations; in fact, he went on to state forcefully what he did mean in words that too often have been forgotten: this “problem” included “the relation of the darker to the

Supremacy and Black Resistance in Pre-Industrial South Africa: The Making of the Colonial Order in the Eastern Cape, 1770–1865 (New York, 1992).

4. Winthrop Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes toward the Negro, 1550–1812* (Chapel Hill, 1968); Audrey Smedley, *Race in North America: Origin and Evolution of a Worldview* (Boulder, 1993); Vron Ware, *Beyond the Pale: White Women, Racism, and History* (New York, 1992); Milford Wolpoff and Rachel Caspari, *Race and Human Evolution* (New York, 1997); Pat Shipman, *The Evolution of Racism: Human Differences and the Use and Abuse of Science* (New York, 1994); Michael N. Pearson, *Port Cities and Intruders: The Swahili Coast, India, and Portugal in the Early Modern Era* (Baltimore, 1997); and Gert Oostindie, ed., *Fifty Years Later: Antislavery, Capitalism, and Modernity in the Dutch Orbit* (Pittsburgh, 1996).

5. Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Ithaca, 1997); Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, *Race and the Enlightenment* (Cambridge, 1997); William B. Cohen, *The French Encounter with Africans: White Response to Blacks, 1530–1880* (Bloomington, 1980); David Goldberg, *Racist Culture: Philosophy and the Politics of Meaning* (Cambridge, 1993).

6. Robert Marshall, *Storm from the East: From Genghis Khan to Kubilai Khan* (Berkeley, 1993), 118, 133, 134. See also Leo de Hartog, *Genghis Khan: Conqueror of the World* (New York, 1989); Roxann Prazniak, *Dialogues across Civilizations: Sketches in World History from the Chinese and European Experiences* (Boulder, 1996); and Jack Goody, *The East in the West* (New York, 1996). More than half a millenium later, Genghis Khan was still roiling relations between Asia and Europe. When Deng Xiaoping of China met with Ho Chi Minh in 1960, the Vietnamese leader informed him that the USSR's Nikita Khrushchev was concerned about the campaign in China to restore the gravesite of Genghis Khan; this “smelled of ‘yellow peril,’” it was said. One Soviet comrade was reported to have said, “Why do they celebrate him as a progressive figure? Many nations had to suffer under his attack.” More work needs to be done to ascertain the extent to which “white supremacy” – and fear of the “yellow peril” – impacted the central development that extended the continuation of the American Century, that is the so-called Sino-Soviet dispute. See “The Short Version of the Negotiations between CPSU and CCP Delegations (September 1960),” *Cold War International History Project Bulletin* 10 (March 1998): 172–73. See also Gordon Chang, *Friends and Enemies: The U.S., China, and the Soviet Union, 1948–1972* (Stanford, 1990); and David Allan Mayers, *Cracking the Monolith: U.S. Policy against the Sino-Soviet Alliance, 1949–1955* (Baton Rouge, 1986).

7. Josep Fontana, *The Distorted Past: A Reinterpretation of Europe* (Cambridge, 1995); Bryce Harland, *Collision Course: America and East Asia in the Past and the Future* (New York, 1996).

lighter races of men [*sic*] in Asia and Africa, in America and the islands of the sea."⁸ In some ways today's era has seen a retreat from the more expansive racial discourse of a century ago, which not only refused to view race as bipolar but also insisted on its global nature. This more expansive approach inherently is more appropriate when considering U.S. foreign policy and the question of "white supremacy."

During the Cold War, Soviet social scientists often referred to what they termed the "general crisis of capitalism." This phrase was intended to suggest that with the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, a fatal breach in the capitalist system had been made and, ineluctably, this system was undergoing an inevitable decline. As one Soviet textbook from that era put it, "under conditions of the general crisis of capitalism, this system is no longer able to keep peoples in subjugation, and one after another they throw off the yoke of capital."⁹ Implicit in these words was the idea that capitalism's "general crisis" would impact the fate of the colonies, which were mostly in Africa and Asia. In other words, capitalism's general crisis also signified a crisis for a system of economic exploitation that was heavily racialized.

Of course, the events of 1989 and the subsequent collapse of the Soviet Union have raised serious questions about the viability of this theory of capitalism's "general decline." What has gone largely unnoticed in the wake of the decline of Communist parties, however, is the concomitant "general crisis of white supremacy," that is, the decline of the system that has meant global domination of those of European descent and – despite the currency crisis across the Pacific – the return of Asia to a preeminent position in the global economy.

Recently in the journal *Foreign Affairs*,¹⁰ Jeffrey Sachs and Steve Radelet spoke to this question:

Beginning in the early 1500s, for more than four centuries now, the West has been ascendant in the world economy. With but 14 percent of the world's population in 1820, Western Europe and four colonial offshoots of Great Britain (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States) had already achieved around 25 percent of world income. By 1950, after a century and a half of Western industrialization, their income share had soared to 56 percent, while their population share hovered around 17 percent. Asia, with 66 percent of the world's population, had a meager 19 percent of world

8. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Boston, 1997), 45.

9. Clemens Dutt, ed., *Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism* (Moscow, n.d.), 317. See also Fenner Brockway, *The Colonial Revolution* (New York, 1973); Fedor Mikhailovich Leonidov, *Racism – An Ideological Weapon of Imperialism* (Moscow, 1965); and H. R. Cowie, ed., *Imperialism and Race Relations* (Melbourne, 1986).

10. Steven Radelet and Jeffrey Sachs, "Asia's Reemergence," *Foreign Affairs* 76 (November/December 1997): 44–59. See also Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony: The World System, A.D. 1250–1350* (New York, 1989).

income, compared with 58 percent in 1820. In 1950, however, one of the great changes of modern history began, with the growth of many Asian economies. By 1992, fueled by high growth rates, Asia's share of world income had risen to 33 percent. This tidal shift is likely to continue, with Asia reemerging by the early 21st century as the world's center of economic activity.

The authors dismiss the impact of the "Southeast Asian currency crises of 1997" as "not a sign of the end of Asian growth but rather a recurring – if difficult to predict – pattern of financial instability that often accompanies economic growth."

Even if one does not accept every aspect of these analysts' bold predictions, it is apparent that the rise of Asia means that something fundamental has happened in the global economy and, without fail, that development will have corresponding impact on diplomatic relations. Unintentionally these analysts' words return us to the days of yore when race was seen – unlike today – not as a solely domestic issue but as a global question of monumental proportions.

The prognostication of these analysts may come as a shock at the end of this century, though it may not have surprised those around at the end of the nineteenth century. The war of 1898 with Spain – which can fairly be said to have marked the beginning of the "American Century" – led to a robust debate in the United States about the theory and praxis of "white supremacy." Likewise, the U.S. decision to interfere in the internal affairs of Hawaii near this same time led to a similar exchange of views: should the United States risk polluting "whiteness" by gobbling up this island kingdom¹¹ or should it intervene on behalf of the settlers precisely to preserve "white supremacy"? These earthshaking events – the annexation of Hawaii and the war of 1898 – that inaugurated the "American Century" were heavily infected with race; and, of course, the development that signaled "white supremacy's" general crisis – Tokyo's victory over Moscow in 1905 – also implicated race.

Such racial dilemmas were to vex the United States for a good deal of the "American Century" – if not before.¹² Of course, after the discrediting of notions of racial supremacy in the wake of the defeat of fascism,¹³ U.S. foreign policy shifted to anticommunism as its motive force; but even here, since the challenges to private property that anticommunism was designed to blunt emerged

11. Thomas Osborne, *"Empire Can Wait": American Opposition to Hawaiian Annexation, 1893–1898* (Kent, 1981); Joseph A. Fry, *John Tyler Morgan and the Search for Southern Autonomy* (Knoxville, 1992); Richard H. Miller, ed., *American Imperialism in 1898: The Quest for National Fulfillment* (New York, 1970); Christopher Lasch, "The Anti-Imperialists, the Philippines and the Inequality of Man," *Journal of Southern History* 24 (August 1954): 319–31; David Healy, *U.S. Expansionism: The Imperialist Urge in the 1890s* (Madison, 1970); Julius Pratt, *Expansionists of 1898: The Acquisition of Hawaii and the Spanish Islands* (Baltimore, 1936); Sylvester K. Stevens, *American Expansion in Hawaii, 1842–1898* (Harrisburg, 1945). I am grateful to Eric Love for helping to shape my thinking on this period.

12. Marie-Jeanne Rossignol, *Nationalist Ferment: Origins of the Foreign Policy of the United States, 1789–1822* (Paris, 1994).

13. Stanley G. Payne, *A History of Fascism, 1914–1945* (Madison, 1995); Michael Burleigh and Wolfgang Ippermann, *The Racial State: Germany, 1933–1945* (New York, 1991).

most dramatically in the “Third World,” anticommunism itself – which was a broad church that could embrace believers of all colors – often appeared to some as no more than an updated mechanism to protect racial privilege.¹⁴

Theodore Roosevelt, the man who led this nation into the American Century, was an admirer of some of the most notorious white supremacists of his era. He was among those who were obsessed with notions of race and, particularly, what was called “race suicide,” that is, the idea that those of European descent were a global minority whose birth rates portended even steeper declines. Men and women – who were “white” – should be “eager lovers,” he thought, in order to arrest this development; these conceptions of race, which implicated gender, were also intended to undergird class privilege.¹⁵ An indication of Roosevelt’s beliefs was his friendship with Madison Grant, one of the leading racial theorists of that era.¹⁶

Another leading racial theorist was Lothrop Stoddard, who in turn was quite friendly with Madison Grant. Unlike many today who speak of race solely in the domestic context, Stoddard saw race as a global phenomenon. “The first real challenge to white world supremacy,” he thought, “was the Russo-Japanese War of 1904.” As a result of an Asian nation’s victory over a European power, this holder of a Harvard doctorate argued that “throughout Asia and even in Africa, races hitherto resigned or sullenly submissive began to dream of throwing off white control.” The United States as one of Europe’s “white outposts” was viewed as central to reversing this “rising tide of color.”¹⁷ Instead, Moscow’s defeat at the hands of Tokyo marked a crucial turning point in the general crisis of “white supremacy,” just as it accelerated the crisis of Czarist Russia.

Mimicking Du Bois, Stoddard proclaimed that the “‘conflict of color’ bids fair to be the fundamental problem of the twentieth century.” Also like Du Bois, he did not see this conflict as merely a “black-white” issue. Instead, writing in

14. Gerald Horne, *Black and Red: W.E.B. Du Bois and the Afro-American Response to the Cold War, 1944–1963* (Albany, 1986); Gerald Horne, *Black Liberation/Red Scare: Ben Davis and the Communist Party* (London, 1994).

15. Thomas G. Dyer, *Theodore Roosevelt and the Idea of Race* (Baton Rouge, 1980), 165, 17. See also George Sinkler, *The Racial Attitudes of American Presidents from Abraham Lincoln to Theodore Roosevelt* (Garden City, 1972); Fritz Hirschfield, *George Washington and Slavery: A Documentary Record* (Columbia, 1997). The connection between race and gender supremacy has not gone unexplored. See, for example, Jessie Daniels, *White Lies: Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality in White Supremacist Discourse* (New York, 1997); Gail Bederman, *Manliness and Civilization: A Cultural History of Gender and Race in the United States, 1880–1917* (Chicago, 1995); Glenda Gilmore, *Gender and Jim Crow: Women and the Politics of White Supremacy in North Carolina, 1896–1920* (Chapel Hill, 1996); Ann Laura Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham, 1995); Zillah R. Eisenstein, *Hatreds: Racialized and Sexualized Conflicts in the 21st Century* (New York, 1996); and Jacinth Samuels, *The Sound of Silence: Racism in Contemporary Feminist Theory* (Ottawa, 1991).

16. See Madison Grant, *The Passing of the Great White Race or the Racial Basis of European History* (New York, 1916).

17. Lothrop Stoddard, *Clashing Tides of Color* (New York, 1935), 9, 54.

the aftermath of World War I, he went so far as to say that “there is no immediate danger of the world being swamped by black blood. But there is a very imminent danger that the white stocks may be swamped by Asiatic blood.” Grant, who wrote the introduction to his friend’s text, confessed that he was riveted by the “conflict between the East and the West – Europe and Asia,” which had “lasted for centuries, in fact, it goes back to the Persian Wars.” For his part, Stoddard was deeply worried that World War I, which was “from the first the White Civil War,” would “gravely complicate the course of race relations” and weaken the ability of Europe and Euro-America to resist the advance of the darker peoples.¹⁸

Still, what was particularly upsetting to these influential racial theorists was Russia’s defeat at the hands of Japan; in retrospect they probably would agree with the assertion that this development served to inaugurate the “general crisis of white supremacy,” not only because it signaled the rise of a legitimate Asian power but, as well, it signaled monumental changes in Russia that were to shake the very foundations of colonialism in Africa and Asia.

Stoddard argued that “1900 was, indeed, the high-water mark of the white tide which had been flooding for four hundred years,” but Tokyo’s triumph marked the “beginning of the ebb.” Sadly, he recalled, “the legend of white invincibility was shattered, the veil of prestige that draped white civilization was torn aside, and the white world’s manifold ills were laid bare for candid examination.”¹⁹

Ironically, W. E. B. Du Bois agreed in some ways with these racial theorists. The defeat of Russia at the hands of Japan, he thought, awakened among Euro-Americans a “fear of colored revolt against white exploitation.” Just as Tokyo’s victory fomented an enduring “Japan-phobia” and “Japanic” among many Euro-Americans, it made Du Bois an enduring “Japan-phile.”²⁰

From the point of view of “white supremacy,” there was justifiable concern about Russia’s defeat. Japan’s victory “electrified the atmosphere in India. It shattered the illusion of European invincibility.” India as well as other colonized nations learned another lesson that did not augur well for the hegemony of European colonialism; for Tokyo’s victory revealed that the “state played an indispensable and large part in the development of a nation . . . and therefore that good government by a foreign nation was no substitute for self-government.”²¹

It should not be thought that Grant, Stoddard, and their ilk viewed all “whites” as similarly qualified to take advantage of the racialized division of the world. As the Holocaust was to reveal, racist thinking also carried deadly implications for those “whites” not viewed as being at the top of the racial pyramid – those of the “Mediterranean race,” for example. Another problem that

18. Lothrop Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color against White Supremacy* (New York, 1920), v, vi, xxiii, 301.

19. *Ibid.*, 153.

20. W. E. B. Du Bois, *Dusk of Dawn: An Essay toward An Autobiography of a Race Concept* (New York, 1968), 232.

21. R. P. Dua, *The Impact of the Russo-Japanese (1905) War on Indian Politics* (New Delhi, 1966), vii, viii.

was to vex “white supremacy” during the American Century was convincing the subalterns of Europe that a system of racial oppression was of no significance – and in fact was beneficial – to them.²²

Inevitably, doctrines of “white supremacy” helped to spawn competing – defensive and less bigoted – philosophies, such as Pan-Africanism²³ and Pan-Asianism. Speaking to Japanese merchants in Kobe months before his death on the subject of “Great Asianism,” Sun Yat-sen “narrated a personal testimony to the impact” of Tokyo’s victory over Moscow. The Chinese leader “was in a ship crossing the Suez Canal soon after the victory when some locals enthusiastically mistook him for a Japanese. Even after discovering their mistake, however, they continued to celebrate their solidarity with him against the imperialist powers. In [his] speech, Sun developed the theme of a racial or color war against the white race, for whom (he cites in English) ‘blood is thicker than water,’ which is why the British were saddened by Russia’s defeat despite their political alliance with the Japanese.”²⁴ Such rumblings eventually obligated the more sober “white” elites – particularly in the United States where conceptions of racial identity were more developed – to move away from overt articulations of racial supremacy to conceptions like anticommunism, which were on the surface “race neutral.”

Lothrop Stoddard’s concern about the impact of Japan’s rise on what could be called the “racial correlation of forces globally,” was mirrored by key U.S. strategists. Alfred Thayer Mahan took to the pages of the *New York Times* to argue that Hawaii should be annexed as a counterweight against Japan and other looming Asian powers, for example, China. “Shall [Hawaii] in the future be an outpost of European civilization,” he asked plaintively, “or of the comparative barbarism of China[?]”²⁵

Concern about the implications of Japan’s rise for “white supremacy” was not just a preoccupation of Washington. It was Japan that was crucial in the evolution of alliance systems in international affairs after 1895, just as Russo-Japanese relations became a key determinant of events in Europe.²⁶

22. Lothrop Stoddard, *Racial Realities in Europe* (New York, 1924), 5.

23. American Society of African Culture, ed., *Pan Africanism Reconsidered* (Berkeley, 1962); Abdul Aziz Said, ed., *Ethnicity and U.S. Foreign Policy* (New York, 1981); Tony Martin, *The Pan-African Connection: From Slavery to Garvey and Beyond* (Dover, 1983); Immanuel Geiss, *The Pan-African Movement: A History of Pan-Africanism in America, Europe, and Africa* (New York, 1974); Adelaide Cromwell Hill and Martin Kilson, eds., *Apropos of Africa: Sentiments of Negro American Leaders on Africa from the 1800s to the 1950s* (London, 1969); Sylvia M. Jacobs, *The African Nexus: Black American Perspectives on the European Partitioning of Africa, 1880–1920* (Westport, 1981); Owen Charles Mathurin, *Henry Sylvester Williams and the Origins of the Pan-African Movement, 1869–1911* (Westport, 1976); Floyd J. Miller, *The Search for a Black Nationality: Black Emigration and Colonization, 1787–1863* (Urbana, 1975); Sterling Stuckey, *The Ideological Origins of Black Nationalism* (Boston, 1972); Elliott P. Skinner, *African-Americans and U.S. Foreign Policy toward Africa, 1850–1924* (Washington, 1992).

24. Prasenjit Duara, “Transnationalism and the Predicament of Sovereignty: China, 1900–1945,” *American Historical Review* 102 (October 1997): 1030–51. See also Marius Jansen, *The Japanese and Sun Yat-Sen* (Cambridge, 1954).

25. *New York Times*, 31 January 1893.

26. John Albert White, *Transition to Global Rivalry: Alliance Diplomacy and the Quadruple Entente, 1895–1907* (New York, 1995).

Despite these ritual invocations of “white supremacy,” contradictorily the United States often had to rely on African-American troops to impose its diktat in the Philippines, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the other “fruits” of empire. Of course, these soldiers of color took on this mission with grave ambivalence; indeed, the tensions created by this process ultimately helped to undermine “white supremacy” itself as it became more and more difficult to launch wars with soldiers of color in the vanguard. The war with Spain, for example, “rather than creating a sense of brotherhood between black and white Americans,” led to “increased racial tensions in the United States.”²⁷ This was the era of the acceleration of lynching and the forcible ouster of African Americans from positions of political power throughout the South.²⁸

The 1890s – March 1896, to be precise – also marked the time when an Italian invasion was soundly rebuffed by Ethiopia; at the time there was “no parallel case in modern history” of a “European army . . . annihilated by a native African race.”²⁹ Ironically, as “white supremacy” was becoming ever more prominent in U.S. foreign policy, forces already were at play that were serving to undermine it. Inspiration from abroad and setbacks at home led African Americans and their allies to escalate their assault against “white supremacy” as they founded the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), with W. E. B. Du Bois in a principal post.³⁰ Hence, though it would be a mistake to view “white supremacy” exclusively through the prism of “black-white” relations, it would be similarly mistaken to deem this dyad irrelevant.

For U.S. writers as diverse as Ernest Hemingway, Saul Bellow, and John Updike have incorporated African themes in their work; as one scholar has put it, for a number of writers from the United States the “main, global role of Africa seems to be the replacement of the vanished American frontier as a quarry of

27. Piero Gleijeses, “African Americans and the War against Spain,” *North Carolina Historical Review* 23 (April 1996): 184–214. See also Willard B. Gatewood, Jr., *Black Americans and the White Man's Burden, 1898–1903* (Urbana, 1975); idem, “Smoked Yankees” and the Struggle for Empire: Letters from Negro Soldiers, 1898–1902 (Fayetteville, 1987); George P. Marks, ed., *The Black Press Views American Imperialism* (New York, 1971); Igor Dementyev, *USA: Imperialists and Anti-Imperialists: The Great Foreign Policy Debate at the Turn of the Century* (Moscow, 1979); Hazel M. McFerson, *The Racial Dimensions of American Overseas Colonial Policy* (Westport, 1997); Alexander De Conde, *Ethnicity, Race, and American Foreign Policy: A History* (Boston, 1992); and Melvin Small, *Democracy and Diplomacy: The Impact of Domestic Politics on U.S. Foreign Policy, 1789–1994* (Baltimore, 1996).

28. Ida B. Wells-Barnett, *Crusader for Justice: The Autobiography of Ida B. Wells* (Chicago, 1970); Ida B. Wells, *Southern Horrors and Other Writings: The Anti-Lynching Campaign of Ida B. Wells, 1892–1900* (Boston, 1997); Nell Irvin Painter, *Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877–1919* (New York, 1987).

29. George Berkeley, *The Campaign of Adowa and the Rise of Menelik* (New York, 1969), vii. See also Boake Carter, *Black Shirt, Black Skin* (Harrisburg, 1935); Teshale Tiberu, *The Making of Modern Ethiopia, 1896–1974* (Lawrenceville, 1995); and Harold Marcus, *The Life and Times of Menelik II: Ethiopia, 1844–1913* (New York, 1975).

30. Charles Flint Kellogg, *NAACP, A History of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People* (Baltimore, 1967); Robert Zangrando, *The NAACP Crusade against Lynching, 1909–1950* (Philadelphia, 1980).

natural, spiritual values.”³¹ Of course, the American Century dawned as the frontier was receding in North America. Thus, it was not just writers who saw Africa as a virtual replacement for the “vanished American frontier.”

The nation that was to become Zimbabwe provides an apt example of how U.S. nationals propelled “white supremacy” in Africa at a time when Washington’s – official – foreign policy was thought to be focused elsewhere.

Frederick Russell Burnham was born on an Indian reservation in Minnesota and later followed the frontier west as it was closing in Arizona and California while gaining a well-deserved reputation as an “Indian fighter.” He sailed for Southern Africa in 1893, in search of a new frontier: he joined Cecil Rhodes’s war against King Lobengula in the land that eventually was called Rhodesia. Burnham, an avowed advocate of what he called “white supremacy,” was quick to draw comparisons between the wars that led to the expropriation of Native Americans and the war that led to the dispossession of the Africans.³²

For Burnham and others of his ilk, the sweeping aside of darker peoples – be they in North America or Africa – was an inevitable process; similarly, this encounter with Africa as the American Century commenced served to reinforce rudimentary notions of “white supremacy.”

As early as June 1893 Burnham felt sufficiently confident to proclaim that “the American element is growing and bids fair to be [a] controlling one here inside 5 years.” He envisioned a replay of what had occurred in the U.S. West – dispossession of the indigenous and stocking the land with immigrants from the Pan-European world. In words that would have resonated in the U.S. South, Burnham confided that the “one great stumbling block” in this African colony was “the presence of the nigger.” His spouse had the wish that there would be “no blacks in Africa,” though she spared the squeamish by not revealing how this feat could be accomplished. Burnham’s brother-in-law didn’t “blame the whites for wanting to kill the nigs.”³³

Burnham was one among many U.S. citizens who were instrumental in bolstering the imperial project of Cecil Rhodes. For many of these North Americans, subjugating Africa under the banner of “white supremacy” was more palatable than doing the same thing under the aegis of the United States’s former colonial master in London: racial identity prevailed over national identity. Arguably, Rhodes would not have been as successful but

31. Daniel Kanyandekwe, “Dreaming of Africa: American Writers and Africa in the Twentieth Century” (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York – Buffalo, 1996), 187.

32. Frederick Russell Burnham, *Scouting on Two Continents* (Bulawayo, 1975), 218; idem, *Taking Chances* (Prescott, 1994). See also Mary and Richard Bradford, eds., *An American Family on the African Frontier: The Burnham Family Letters, 1893–1896* (Niwot, CO, 1993); Arthur Keppel-Jones, *Rhodes and Rhodesia: The White Conquest of Zimbabwe, 1884–1902* (Montreal, 1983); and Dane Kennedy, *Islands of White: Settler Society and Culture in Kenya and Southern Rhodesia, 1890–1939* (Durham, 1987).

33. Frederick Russell Burnham to Madge Blick, June 1893, Frederick Russell Burnham to Josiah Russell, circa 1894, Blanche Blick Burnham to Blick family, 6 February 1894, John Blick to parents, 16 October 1894, in Bradford and Bradford, eds., *An American Family on the African Frontier*, 65, 133, 121, 176, 268.

for the timely assistance of his brethren from the United States.³⁴ Britain had tried to burn down Washington, DC during the War of 1812 and tensions between the two states were not easy to extinguish.³⁵ Just as “whiteness” served in the United States to calm preexisting tensions between those of English and Irish descent or Serb and Croat descent, this construction played a similar role on the international scene by helping to reconcile John Bull and Uncle Sam; and just as “whiteness” was substantially defined in the United States as being the antipode of a negative “blackness,” it played a similar role in Africa.

But “white supremacy” in the United States was never solely targeted at African Americans: Native Americans were the first victims. Thus, not surprisingly, when Frederick Russell Burnham met Winston Churchill, as the American Century was beginning, the future prime minister “questioned me sharply and minutely on my early life among the Indians and made me recount almost step-by-step every contact I had ever had with any enemy along the wide frontier from Texas to California.”³⁶

Burnham, who eventually returned to the United States and became a wealthy oil baron, was friendly with Theodore Roosevelt, who also traveled extensively in Africa. The U.S. president acknowledged that Cecil Rhodes’s “work” in “Matabeleland represented a great and striking conquest for civilization.”³⁷

The “Pioneer Column,” which was in the vanguard of Rhodes’s colonizing project, was reminiscent of earlier “pioneer” efforts in North America. Perhaps this is why so many from the United States were part of this crusade. Typical of this group was William Harvey Brown, born in Des Moines; he came to Africa in 1890 on behalf of the Smithsonian but stayed on and became a “prominent Rhodesian and a member of the Legislative Council.”³⁸ Brown’s ideas reflected “white supremacy.” He considered Africans to be “savages and barbarians” and felt that “forced servitude” was good for them. He hinted at genocide against Africans, whom he compared to Native Americans, and contrasted both negatively

34. Maurice Heany, one of the biggest businessmen in “Rhodesia” and a cousin of Edgar Allen Poe, also fought Native Americans in the West before crossing the Atlantic. Coleman Joseph, born in Philadelphia, built Bulawayo’s first synagogue. See Eric Rosenthal, *Stars and Stripes in Africa* (Cape Town, 1968), 7, 15, 37, 176. Mining engineers from the United States, like John Hays Hammond and Gardner Williams, pioneered in the development of gold mines in the region. Bradford and Bradford, eds., *An American Family on the African Frontier*, xi. See also R. W. S. Turner, “American Links with Early Days of Rhodesia,” *Rhodesia Calls* 55 (May–June 1969): 4–13.

35. Richard Norton Smith, *The Colonel: The Life and Legend of Robert McCormick, 1880–1955* (Boston, 1997): this famed publisher was typical of those among the U.S. elite who maintained staunch anti-British views. See also Anne Orde, *The Eclipse of Great Britain: The United States and British Imperial Decline, 1895–1956* (New York, 1996); Mark Curtis, *The Ambiguities of Power: British Foreign Policy since 1945* (London, 1995); and Anita Inder Singh, *The Limits of British Influence: South Asia and the Anglo-American Relationship, 1947–1956* (New York, 1993); Alternatively, see Giora Goodman, “Who is Anti-American? The British Left and the United States, 1945–1956” (Ph.D. diss., University of London, 1996).

36. Burnham, *Taking Chances*, 266.

37. William N. Tilchin, *Theodore Roosevelt and the British Empire: A Study in Presidential Statecraft* (New York, 1997), 24.

38. Adrian Carter, *The Pioneers of Matabeleland* (Bulawayo, 1977), 101.

with the “Anglo-Saxon race.” He saw Africa as an extension of the rapidly closing frontier in the United States and as an “outlet for the overcrowded countries of Europe”; Africans, he concluded, were “more likely to vanish than remain.”³⁹

Thus, the United States entered the twentieth century with two contradictory impulses: on the one hand, there was the clearcut rise of “white supremacy”; on the other hand were forces, particularly among African Americans, that were opposed to its ascension. But since African Americans were in the process of being ousted from what little influence they held, those opposed to “white supremacy” found it difficult to resist this juggernaut.

Within the global context, Japan played a pivotal and contradictory role in this process; just as the United States sought to utilize chauvinism to justify its domination of its recent colonial appendages, Japan did the same in Korea. Yet, Japan was not “white,” and thus its ascension was viewed with no small trepidation among those who held “white supremacy” dear.

This paradoxical situation came clear in the aftermath of World War I when Japan clamored at Versailles for the establishment of principles of international discourse favoring racial equality. Needless to say, this development was viewed with more than mild concern by the Southerner – Woodrow Wilson – who occupied the White House, not to mention his Dixiecrat comrades. There was a fierce debate on this Japanese resolution on the “equality of nations”; the U.S. delegation feared what this might mean concerning immigration, particularly to California.⁴⁰ The United States viewed itself not just as an Atlantic nation but as a Pacific one as well; a key difference between the two, of course, was that racial tensions were more prominent in the latter region. Reputedly, “the President said that he did not trust the Japanese.”⁴¹

The very existence of Japan – a modern capitalist nation in Asia – called into question the essential premises of “white supremacy” and, as a partial consequence, was viewed as a dire threat to the United States. Japan’s existence also hindered the execution of U.S. foreign policy during this era, as Tokyo established friendly relations with the leaders of a sector of the U.S. body politic that was not necessarily favorable to “white supremacy” – African Americans. After World War I, A. Philip Randolph – the legendary black labor leader – “concluded that Japan, plus the power of other free nations ‘combined with an international league of workingmen’ could effectively pressure the

39. William Harvey Brown, *On the South African Frontier: The Adventures and Observations of an American in Mashonaland and Mataberland* (New York, 1899), x, 391, 400, 418, 420.

40. Arthur Link, ed., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Volume 57, April 5–22, 1919* (Princeton, 1987), 570–71. See also Henry P. Frei, *Japan’s Southward Advance and Australia: From the Sixteenth Century to World War II* (Honolulu, 1991).

41. Arthur Link, ed., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Volume 54, January 11–February 7, 1919* (Princeton, 1986), 379. See also Phil Hammond, ed., *Cultural Difference, Media Memories: Anglo-American Images of Japan* (London, 1997); Robert Lansing, *The Peace Negotiations: A Personal Narrative* (Boston, 1921), 243–56.

Western powers.”⁴² Randolph backed up his rhetoric by joining in 1919 with Marcus Garvey and others at the home of the one of the nation’s few black women millionaires – C. J. Walker – to form the International League of Darker Peoples. The league was short lived but one thing it did do was to arrange a meeting with a visiting Japanese publisher and editor at the Waldorf-Astoria in New York City in order to seek Tokyo’s assistance in raising the question of racial equality at Versailles. Tellingly, the league not only encompassed those of African descent but those of Asian – particularly Japanese – descent as well.⁴³

Increasingly, a growing sector of those in the African diaspora felt that they could play upon the contradictions between Washington and London on the one hand and Tokyo on the other to their own advantage. Both British and U.S. military intelligence took careful note of an editorial in Garvey’s newspaper, *Negro World*, which said as much: “With the rising militarism of Asia and the standing militarism of Europe one can foresee nothing else but an armed clash between the white and yellow races. When this clash of millions comes, an opportunity will have presented itself to the Negro people of the world to free themselves. . . . The next war will be between the Negroes and the whites, unless our demands for justice are recognized. With Japan to fight with us we can win such a war.”⁴⁴ Eliminating the more egregious aspects of “white supremacy” was increasingly seen in Washington as a question of national security, though this forced march away from the power of race was often cloaked in the disguise of morality.

Japanese newspapers carried editorials condemning lynchings of African Americans in the Deep South. When African Americans were outraged by the production of the film *Birth of a Nation*, a visiting delegation of Japanese filmmakers praised their efforts to counter this racist propaganda. Tokyo, in short, was being looked to by many African Americans as a savior.⁴⁵ Hence, as U.S. relations with Japan soured after World War I, some were beginning to view African Americans as a potential “fifth column” in future conflicts between these two giants.

Japan’s relations with African Americans were a reflection of its dealings with the continent of Africa itself; rather quickly, Tokyo recognized that the aching Achilles’s heel of the European powers – and their cousins in Washington – was their praxis of “white supremacy” in Africa and elsewhere, which allowed Japan to more readily portray itself as a viable alternative to these nations. Indeed, competition in Africa was a salient factor in the rapid deterioration

42. Judith Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey: Race and Class in Modern Society* (Baton Rouge, 1986), 50.

43. Robert Hill, ed., *The Marcus Garvey and Universal Negro Improvement Association Papers, Volume 1, 1826–August 1919* (Berkeley, 1983), 345.

44. *Ibid.*, 404.

45. Reginald Kearney, “Afro-American Views of the Japanese, 1900–1945” (Ph.D. diss., Kent State University, 1991). Claude Clegg, *An Original Man: The Life and Times of Elijah Mubammad* (New York, 1997). See also George W. Shepherd, Jr., *Racial Influences on American Foreign Policy* (New York, 1970); and Arnold Shankman, *Ambivalent Friends: Afro-Americans View the Immigrant* (Westport, 1982).

of relations between Tokyo and London during the first half of the twentieth century. During the late 1920s particularly, the expansion of Japanese economic interests began to threaten European interests, most notably in Africa.⁴⁶

The developing relationship between Ethiopia and Japan captured the attention of many in the African diaspora. When discussion was bruited about a merger – via marriage – of the royal families in both nations, African Americans especially, who were forbidden by law in most jurisdictions to marry Euro-Americans, were conspicuously moved.⁴⁷ Contrarily, in South Africa – where the “highest stage of white supremacy” had been reached – it was slowly being recognized that this system was facing external pressure from Tokyo and elsewhere that could only buttress a preexisting internal pressure.⁴⁸

Similarly, World War I led directly to another development that can be said to have contributed to the general crisis of “white supremacy”: the Bolshevik Revolution. And, like Tokyo, this new “threat” was linked with the staunchest domestic opponent of “white supremacy”: African Americans. Reportedly, Woodrow Wilson felt that the “American Negro” troops “returning from abroad would be our greatest medium in conveying bolshevism to America.” In addition to the question of “reds,” the president was also deathly concerned with the question of “whites.” Thus, he added, the “French people have placed the Negro soldier in France on [a level of] equality with the white man, and ‘it has gone to their heads.’”⁴⁹

“White supremacy” was producing ever more complex complications for U.S. foreign policy. Early in 1919 one harried U.S. intelligence agent argued that increasingly African-American radicalism was aiming at a “combination of the other colored races of the world. As a colored movement it looks to Japan for leadership; as a radical movement it follows Bolshevism and has intimate relations with various socialistic groups throughout the United States.”⁵⁰ The “combination” of this “Colored Scare” and “Red Scare” was taken quite seriously by Washington.

As ever, U.S. elites had to worry that “white supremacy” at home had a noticeable downside: those not sharing in its bounty might feel obligated to align with the real and imagined enemies of Washington, thereby jeopardizing

46. Richard Albert Bradshaw, “Japan and European Colonialism in Africa, 1800–1937” (Ph.D. diss., Ohio University, 1992), 15. See also Shinya Sugiyama, *Japan's Industrialization in the World Economy, 1859–1899: Export Trade and Overseas Competition* (London, 1988); Kweku Ampiah, “British Commerical Policies against Japanese Expansionism in East and West Africa, 1931–1935,” *International Journal of African Historical Studies* 23 (1990): 619–41; and Peter Lowe, *Great Britain and the Origins of the Pacific War: A Study of British Policy in East Asia, 1937–1941* (New York, 1977).

47. *Chicago Defender*, 13 July 1935.

48. Hedley A. Chilvers, *The Yellow Man Looks On: Being the Story of the Anglo-Dutch Conflict in Southern Africa and Its Interest for the Peoples of Asia* (London, 1933).

49. Arthur Link, ed., *The Papers of Woodrow Wilson, Volume 55, February 8–March 16, 1919* (Princeton, 1986), 471. See also Theodore Kornweibel, Jr., “Seeing Red”: *Federal Campaigns against Black Militancy, 1919–1925* (Bloomington, 1998).

50. Kornweibel, “Seeing Red,” 81.

national security.⁵¹ Even France, of all nations, whose exploitation of Africans was noticeably egregious, often took a different tack toward African Americans, which provided it with leverage in Washington.⁵²

Still – Japan and France notwithstanding – it was the advent of the Soviet Union that stirred the most concern, not only because this nation quickly attracted a number of leading African-American intellectuals but, in addition, it also made inroads in Africa itself by pledging to assist those nations struggling to throw off the yoke of colonialism.⁵³ Yet even here Japanese played a pivotal role. Sen Katayama helped to organize Communist parties in Japan, Mexico, Canada, and the United States. Eventually he was elected to the leading body of the Communist International, based in Moscow, where in 1928 he helped to formulate the official position of the Reds on the “Negro Question,” which included the “right of Negroes to self-determination in the Southern States.” The “Comintern” pledged to assist African-Americans in their effort to discard the yoke of Jim Crow and third-class citizenship – a promise that could not be easily disregarded. Katayama was also a close friend of the Jamaican-American poet Claude McKay during this writer’s sojourn with the organized left.⁵⁴ McKay was just one of a host of leading black intellectuals – a list that was to include W. E. B. Du Bois, Shirley Graham Du Bois, Paul Robeson, Langston Hughes, and Claudia Jones, among others – who were to align with the forces of socialism: the pestilence of “white supremacy” was no small factor in helping to explicate this crucial decision.

As Tokyo, then Moscow in jujitsu fashion began to turn “white supremacy” back against those in the United States that benefited from it, it was beginning to dawn that racist thinking could carry the seeds of its own destruction. Just as capitalism itself inexorably spawned its own gravediggers, the same could be said for “white supremacy.” This realization helped to guarantee that ultimately Washington could gain an advantage over its erstwhile allies in Paris and Brussels and Lisbon by taking positions on colonialism in Africa that were not in total accord with those of Western Europe; this realization also helped to ensure that Jim Crow itself would not survive the American Century.

The implications of the Bolshevik Revolution for “white supremacy” were glimpsed early on by Lothrop Stoddard, Madison Grant, and other theorists of

51. Merton Dillon, *Slavery Attacked: Southern Slaves and Their Allies, 1619–1865* (Baton Rouge, 1990); Benjamin Quarles, *The Negro in the American Revolution* (Chapel Hill, 1961).

52. John D. Hargreaves, ed., *France and West Africa: An Anthology of Historical Documents* (New York, 1969); Arthur Helps, ed., *Letters of Oswald Spengler, 1913–1936* (New York, 1966), 159. Tyler Stovall, *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light* (Boston, 1996); Michel Fabre, *From Harlem to Paris: Black Writers in France, 1840–1980* (Urbana, 1991).

53. Philip S. Foner, *The Bolshevik Revolution: Its Impact on American Radicals, Liberals, and Labor* (New York, 1967); Allison Blakeley, *Russia and the Negro: Blacks in Russian History and Thought* (Washington, 1986); Daniel Mason and Jessica Smith, eds., *Lenin’s Impact on the United States* (New York, 1970).

54. Karl G. Yoneda, “The Heritage of Sen Katayama,” *Political Affairs* 14 (March 1975): 38–57. See also Hyman Kublin, *Asian Revolutionary: The Life of Sen Katayama* (Princeton, 1964); Wayne Cooper, *Claude McKay: Rebel Sojourner in the Harlem Renaissance: A Biography* (Baton Rouge, 1987); and Tyrone Tillery, *Claude McKay: A Black Poet’s Struggle for Identity* (Amherst, 1992).

“white supremacy.” The latter saw “Asia in the guise of Bolshevism with Semitic leadership and Chinese executioners organizing an assault upon western Europe.” The former saw Lenin as “a modern Jenghiz Khan plotting the plunder of a world”; Bolshevism, he exclaimed, was “in fact, as anti-racial as it is anti-social” and “thus reveals itself as the arch-enemy of civilization and the race. Bolshevism is the renegade, the traitor within the gates, who would betray the citadel. Therefore, Bolshevism must be crushed out with iron heels, no matter what the cost.”⁵⁵

Japan did not live up to the promise bestowed upon it by many African Americans, particularly after Italy's invasion of Ethiopia.⁵⁶ Then again, Washington's own tepid response to this international crisis did not inspire confidence either.⁵⁷ Nevertheless, an influential sector of Black Nationalists continued to be drawn to Tokyo – even as tensions with Washington accelerated: particularly ominous was their uniting on a common platform of “anti-whiteness.”⁵⁸

These viewpoints were not borne by a sliver of opinion among African Americans. Though Gunnar Myrdal confirmed the general anti-fascist outlook of African Americans he did not miss the fact that some took “vicarious satisfaction in imagining a Japanese invasion of the Southern states”; the Swedish social scientist warned that if black demands were neglected after the war, no one could guarantee their reaction “if later a new war were to be fought more definitely along color lines.”⁵⁹

In 1942 a number of African-American nationalists – including Elijah Muhammad, later to be deified by both the early Marcolm X and Louis Farrakhan – were arrested because of pro-Japanese sympathies. Even Roy Wilkins, the moderate leader of the NAACP, had to concede that the catastrophe at Pearl Harbor was caused in part by the tendency among many Euro-Americans to despise any not regarded as “white.” Folklore emerged about a black sharecropper who told his white boss during the war, “‘By the way, Captain, I hear the Japs done declared war on you white folks.’”⁶⁰ U.S. elites had to be concerned

55. Stoddard, *The Rising Tide of Color*, xxxi, 219, 221.

56. James Dugan and Laurence Lafore, *Days of Emperor and Clown: The Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935–1936* (Garden City, 1973). See also William R. Scott, *The Sons of Sheba's Race: African-Americans and the Italo-Ethiopian War, 1935–1941* (Bloomington, 1993); Joseph E. Harris, *African-American Reaction to War in Ethiopia, 1936–1941* (Baton Rouge, 1994); Thomas M. Coffey, *Lion by the Tail: The Story of the Italian-Ethiopian War* (New York, 1974); S. K. B. Asante, *Pan-African Protest: West Africa and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis, 1934–1941* (London, 1977); and Harold G. Marcus, *Ethiopia, Great Britain, and the United States, 1941–1974* (Berkeley, 1983).

57. Brice Harris, Jr., *The United States and the Italo-Ethiopian Crisis* (Westport, 1981).

58. Ernest Allen, Jr., “When Japan was ‘Champion of the Darker Races’: Satokata Takahashi and the Flowering of Black Messianic Nationalism,” *Black Scholar: Journal of Black Studies and Research* 24 (1994): 23–46.

59. Gunnar Myrdal, *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy* (New York, 1944), 815, 1016, 1400.

60. John Dower, *War without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War* (New York, 1986), 175–76. See also Robert O. Ballou, *Shinto, the Unconquered Enemy: Japan's Doctrine of Racial Superiority and*

that African Americans not only might be less than enthusiastic about going to war against Japan but – perhaps worse – this minority might harbor a burgeoning “fifth column” that could undermine the war effort.

With an intense sobriety Herbert Hoover viewed the military landscape in 1942 through the lens of “white supremacy”: “When the Japanese take Burma, China and organize the forces of the discontent in India,” he warned,

we are looking in the face of something new. . . . The white man has kept control of Asiatics by dividing parts of them against the other . . . and generally establishing an arrogant superiority. Universally, the white man is hated by the Chinese, Malayan, Indian and Japanese alike. . . . Unless [Japanese] leadership is destroyed, the Western Hemisphere is going to confront this mass across the Pacific. Unless they are defeated, they will demand entry and equality in emigration . . . and there will be in twenty-five years an Asiatic flood into South America that will make the Nazis look like pikers. . . . And we will have to go through with it until we have destroyed [Japan]. That may take a million American lives and eight or ten years, but it will have to be done.⁶¹

A considerable percentage of those “million American lives” to be sacrificed would be of African descent and many of them were beginning to wonder why they should give their lives simply to protect and preserve “white supremacy.” The same question was being asked in different ways across the globe. When Sir Stafford Cripps was dispatched by London to an Indian National Congress gathering in Dehli in an attempt to enlist support for the British war against Japan in return for a form of independence, Mahatma Gandhi reputedly said in reply, ““This is a postdated cheque on a crashing bank.””⁶²

World War II, *inter alia*, represented a true crisis of “white supremacy.” It was becoming evident that Washington and London particularly were finding it ever more difficult to explain why lives must be sacrificed so that they would not be dominated by Tokyo and Berlin, while the United States and United Kingdom continued to maintain racialized systems of oppression at home and abroad. Ineluctably, World War II compelled these great powers to endure a “race” away from the “power” that the more outlandish versions of “white supremacy” represented. Even though powerful forces in the United States had

World Conquest (New York, 1945); Russell Braddon, *Japan against the World, 1941–2041: The 100-Year War for Supremacy* (New York, 1983); Willard H. Elsbree, *Japan's Role in South-East Asian Nationalist Movements* (Cambridge, 1953); Akira Iriye, *Power and Culture: The Japanese-American War, 1941–1945* (Cambridge, 1981); V. G. Kiernan, *The Lords of Humankind: Black Man, Yellow Man, and White Man in an Age of Empire* (Boston, 1969); John J. Stephan, *Hawaii under the Rising Sun: Japan's Plan for Conquest after Pearl Harbor* (Honolulu, 1984); Hugh Tinker, *Race, Conflict, and International Order: From Empire to United Nations* (New York, 1977); and Rubin Francis Weston, *Racism in U.S. Imperialism: The Influence of Racial Assumptions on American Foreign Policy, 1893–1946* (Columbia, 1972).

61. Walter LaFeber, *The Clash: A History of U.S.-Japanese Relations* (New York, 1997), 217.

62. Richard Storry, *Japan and the Decline of the West in Asia, 1894–1943* (London, 1979), 4. See also Bradford A. Lee, *Britain and the Sino-Japanese War, 1937–1939* (Stanford, 1973); and Gunter Bischof and Robert L. Dupont, eds., *The Pacific War Revisited* (Baton Rouge, 1997).

significant influence on Nazi ideology, there was a sobering realization in Washington that doctrines of racial and ethnic supremacy – if left unchecked – could lead to a holocaust of unimaginable proportions.⁶³ Still, like the cowboys of old, the United States began to exit the saloon of “white supremacy” with their guns blazing, dropping atomic bombs in a final flourish on Japan as a concluding reminder of what would befall those so bold as to challenge the existing racial order. Then they turned their attention to Moscow, which too had been seeking to take advantage of “white supremacy” – the once proud system of racial privilege that now was being seen as a major liability threatening the continued existence of the American Century.

Though the praxis of “white supremacy” was castigated officially and eroded substantially during the Cold War, it was not extinguished altogether. Instead, it was buttressed by an aggressive anticommunism that had the advantage of being – at least formally – nonracial. The anticolonial upsurge, however, was designed to overturn the racialized system of oppression – and underdevelopment – that colonialism represented.⁶⁴ In turn, the unjust – and racialized – enrichment that colonialism represented could be better defended in this new era by terming anticolonial opponents as “Communist.”⁶⁵ The tagging of anticolonialists as “red” slowed down the movement against colonialism and – perhaps not coincidentally – gave “white supremacy” a new lease on life.

In the United States this battle against “white supremacy” had a certain uniqueness. Mary Dudziak is largely correct in asserting that “desegregation” was a “Cold War imperative.”⁶⁶ Without slighting at all the heroic contribution of those who participated in the “civil rights movement,” it is long past time to recognize that – just like the anti-apartheid movement – the international community played a substantial role in compelling the United States to move

63. Stefan Kuhl, *The Nazi Connection: Eugenics, American Racism, and German National Socialism* (New York, 1994); Lawrence Le Blanc, *The United States and the Genocide Convention* (Durham, 1991); Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, *The History and Sociology of Genocide: Analyses and Case Studies* (New Haven, 1990).

64. Walter Rodney, *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (Washington, 1981); Amílcar Cabral, *Return to the Source: Selected Speeches* (New York, 1974); Samora Machel, *Samora Machel, An African Revolutionary: Selected Speeches and Writings* (London, 1985); Kenneth Kaunda, *Zambia Shall Be Free: An Autobiography* (New York, 1963); Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-Colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (London, 1968).

65. Robert J. McMahon, *Colonialism and Cold War: The United States and the Struggle for Indonesian Independence, 1945–1949* (Ithaca, 1981); Sean Kelly, *America's Tyrant: The CIA and Mobutu of Zaire* (Washington, 1993); William Roger Louis, *Imperialism at Bay, 1941–1945: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire* (Oxford, 1977); H.W. Brands, *The Specter of Neutralism: The United States and the Emergence of the Third World, 1947–1960* (New York, 1989); David N. Gibbs, *The Political Economy of Third World Intervention: Mines, Money, and U.S. Foreign Policy in the Congo Crisis* (Chicago, 1991); Richard D. Mahoney, *JFK: Ordeal in Africa* (New York, 1983); Kwame Nkrumah, *The Challenge of the Congo* (New York, 1967); Stephen Weisman, *American Foreign Policy in the Congo, 1960–1964* (Ithaca, 1974).

66. Mary L. Dudziak, “Desegregation as a Cold War Imperative,” *Stanford Law Review* 41 (November 1988): 61–120.

away from the more outrageous aspects of “white supremacy.” How could Washington credibly charge Moscow with human rights violations when minorities in this nation were treated so horribly? The pressure from the international community was felt most directly – and powerfully – during the 1957 school desegregation crisis in Little Rock. It is clear in retrospect that President Dwight Eisenhower’s decision to commit troops to this racial tinderbox in Arkansas was motivated substantially by his sensitivity to the damage this crisis was having on the global image of the United States, particularly at a time when the Soviet launching of Sputnik was causing severe doubts about Washington’s overall position.⁶⁷ Simultaneously, these domestic maneuvers affected U.S. foreign policy as Washington found it more difficult to align with erstwhile allies in South Africa and Rhodesia as recently enfranchised African Americans and a newly energized anticolonial movement began to object.⁶⁸

The importance of the international community in the battle against segregation can be detected by examining the travails of those in the vanguard of this struggle on this side of the Atlantic. The attack on Paul Robeson accelerated when he was reported to have cast doubt on the desire of African Americans to participate in a war against the Soviet Union, thus reminding U.S. rulers of the unease they had felt about waging war against Japan a few years earlier.⁶⁹ Martin Luther King’s difficulties accelerated after he began to denounce the war in Vietnam more forcefully.⁷⁰ African Americans – and their opponents – implicitly recognized that a formidable weapon in the conflict with domestic racism was international leverage.

Still, Robeson, King, and others persevered and helped to keep global issues on the front burner at a time when the domestic struggle against Jim Crow was preoccupying most. Africa generally and Southern Africa particularly became the epicenter of the struggle against “white supremacy” during the Cold War. Moscow – the much reviled “evil empire” of U.S. propaganda – actually provided diplomatic and material assistance to the Africans, much to the consternation of Washington: the United States had to be concerned that

67. Azza Salama Layton, “International Pressure and the U.S. Government’s Response to Little Rock,” *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 56 (Autumn 1997): 257–72. See also the forthcoming definitive article on this subject by Mary L. Dudziak, “The Little Rock Crisis and Foreign Affairs: Race, Resistance, and the Image of American Democracy,” *Southern California Law Review*.

68. Penny M. Von Eschen, *Race against Empire: Black Americans and Anticolonialism, 1937–1957* (Ithaca, 1997); Brenda Gayle Plummer, *Rising Wind: Black Americans and U.S. Foreign Affairs, 1935–1960* (Chapel Hill, 1996); Robert Weisbord, *Ebony Kinship: Africa, Africans, and the Afro-Americans* (Westport, 1973); Jake C. Miller, *The Black Presence in American Foreign Affairs* (Washington, 1978); Lewis V. Baldwin, *Toward the Beloved Community: Martin Luther King, Jr. and South Africa* (Cleveland, 1995); Gerald R. Gill, “Afro-American Opposition to the United States’ Wars of the Twentieth Century: Dissent, Discontent, and Disinterest” (Ph.D. diss., Howard University, 1985); Austin M. Chakaodza, *International Diplomacy in Southern Africa: From Reagan to Mandela* (London, 1990); Patrick J. Furlong, *Between Crown and Swastika: The Impact of the Radical Right on the Afrikaner Nationalist Movement in the Fascist Era* (Hanover, 1991).

69. Jeffrey Stewart, ed., *Paul Robeson: Artist and Citizen* (New Brunswick, 1998).

70. Kenneth O’Reilly, “Racial Matters”: *The FBI’s Secret File on Black America, 1960–1972* (New York, 1989), 242–45, 286–90.

African Americans particularly would be moved by this development, which could present a ticklish domestic and international problem for Washington. Thus, during the decisive stages of the Algerian Revolution, Moscow – according to Soviet leader Boris Ponomarev – “supplied free to the People’s Liberation Army . . . 25 thousand rifles, 21 thousand machine guns and sub-machine guns, 1300 howitzers, cannons and mortars, many tens of thousands of pistols and other weapons. Over 5 million rubles’ worth of clothes, provisions and medical supplies were supplied to Algeria by Soviet social organizations alone. Hundreds of wounded from the Algerian Liberation Army were saved and treated in the Soviet Union. Soviet wheat, sugar, butter, preserves, condensed milk, etc., streamed into Algeria.”⁷¹ Moscow provided similar assistance to those fighting colonialism and other forms of exploitation in IndoChina, Southern Africa, and Cuba, which too had a substantial population of African descent. Indeed, this assistance to those fighting racialized systems of oppression was no small factor in sparking an economic and political crisis that led to the collapse of the USSR.

Many in the United States felt such aid violated the basic norms of “peaceful co-existence” and “detente,” though without this Soviet aid, Asians and Africans – and Cubans – would have faced more difficulty in confronting their opponents. These opponents – particularly those in Washington – continually asserted that their opposition to this Third World-Moscow alliance was based not on some outdated devotion to “white supremacy” but the Cold War creed of anticommunism.

Southern Rhodesia, the colony that Frederick Russell Burnham had helped to found decades earlier, provides an illustrative case study of the fate of “white supremacy” during a Cold War era when this doctrine was officially denounced. The fact is that despite these official bromides, racist thinking continued to exert a powerful influence on U.S. foreign policy, even when it was not disguised in the finery of the newer philosophy of anticommunism.

Dean Acheson, by his own admission, was “present at the creation” of the Cold War confrontation. His anti-Communist credentials were impeccable and he was a member in good standing of the U.S. ruling class. Yet, in his private communications – and at times those in public as well – he conceded that “white supremacy” was no negligible factor in explaining his support for the minority regimes in Southern Africa. Often that support was expressed directly to Sir Roy Welensky, a prominent member of the Rhodesian elite.

In 1965 this colony had refused to accede to the winds of change blowing through the continent and declared a “unilateral declaration of independence” in defiance of the movement toward decolonization. Though denounced by many in the international community, Acheson – and many other influential U.S. leaders – adamantly backed the rebel regime in Rhodesia. Why? Sir Roy

71. “Stenogram: Meeting of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Chinese Communist Party, Moscow, 5–20 July 1963,” *Cold War International History Project* 10 (March 1998): 175–82.

hinted at one reason in 1971 when Richard Nixon was cozying up to China, a maneuver that was decisive in creating a bloc that ultimately brought down the Soviet Union. One would have thought that the usually far-sighted Rhodesian leader would have sensed the obvious geopolitical implications of this stragem but he had other important issues on his mind – namely the impact the Nixon maneuver had on “white supremacy” – as he informed Acheson: “We Whites seldom appreciate the extent to which the Black and the Brown man order their thinking on how strong or weak they think one is, and it is, therefore always unwise to start off on a basis they think one is afraid of them. This may sound childish to you Dean, but I’ve lived all my life where the Whites have been outnumbered many times. I don’t know the Yellow man, but I’m told that he is even more concerned about his dignity and face-saving than the Black man and will always interpret our casual ways as being weak.”⁷² Acheson fed and reflected this racist thinking, telling his interlocutor, “I still cling to Bret Harte’s aphorism, ‘That for ways that are dark And for tricks that are vain The Heathen Chinese is peculiar.’ But no more so than the heathen Japanese.”⁷³

Welensky, Acheson, and many other leaders from the Pan-European world were not simply driven by anticommunism during the Cold War – they were driven by “white supremacy” as well. It did appear that as the Pan-African ideal took hold in the midst of the Cold War, a revived “Pan-Europeanism” arose to counter it. This was particularly the case in the United States but what has been ignored in explaining why so many in the United States would seek to thwart the newly proclaimed antiracist consensus of the Cold War era is the simple fact that the “personal was political.” In other words, it was not only the case that U.S. investors perceived that they had a material stake in maintaining the bounty of cheap labor and minerals that “white supremacy” had delivered;⁷⁴ in addition, quite a few in the United States had “kith and kin” in Southern Africa who they backed avidly in their attempt to establish minority rule: racial fears were a primary motive for this support, specifically fears of Europeans being overrun by African “hordes.”

Ian Smith, the leader of the illegal regime in Rhodesia, had an uncle who was “well established in the United States.” When he met then Secretary of

72. Sir Roy Welensky to Dean Acheson, 30 July 1971, Dean Acheson Papers, box 34, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut. For a fuller exploration of the U.S.-Rhodesian axis, see Gerald Horne, “Gangsters, ‘Whiteness,’ Reactionary Politics, and the U.S.-Rhodesian Connection,” *Southern Africa Political and Economic Monthly* 9 (Number 1995): 31–34. See also Gerald Horne, *From the Barrel of a Gun: The U.S. and the War against Zimbabwe, 1965–1980* (forthcoming).

73. Dean Acheson to Sir Roy Welensky, 7 October 1971, Acheson Papers, box 34. Sir Roy had a virtual obsession with China: “I heard the announcement that China had put her first satellite into orbit. I noticed our newspapers this morning treated it as almost a minor event – I consider it one of the most serious bits of news I have listened to for a long time!” Sir Roy Welensky to Dean Acheson, 27 April 1970, Acheson Papers, box 34.

74. Robert Kinloch Massie, *Loosing the Bonds: The United States and South Africa in the Apartheid Years* (New York, 1993); Thomas Borstelmann, *Apartheid’s Reluctant Uncle: The United States and Southern Africa in the Early Cold War* (New York, 1993); Janice Love, *The U.S. Anti-Apartheid Movement: Local Activism in Global Politics* (New York, 1985).

State Henry Kissinger, Smith noted that “like me,” the diplomat’s wife was “conservative by nature, had Scottish blood through ancestry and believed that we had much in common.”⁷⁵ President Lyndon Baines Johnson was “very interested” in the Baines School in Bulawayo and wondered if it was part of a familial relationship. He could only trace this branch of his family back to 1741 and did not know if this meant that he too had relatives in Rhodesia.⁷⁶ A.R.W. Stumbles, a former speaker of the Rhodesian Parliament, like many leading Rhodesians was born in South Africa but “his father . . . Robert’s great-grandmother was first cousin to American President George Washington.” The “W” in his name stood for Washington.⁷⁷ Angus Graham, who served as Rhodesia’s minister of external affairs and one of that nation’s leading white supremacists, proudly told Dean Acheson of the “letter” he received from “Mrs. Nora Acheson, a Canadian who married my mother’s cousin, Patrick Acheson.”⁷⁸ Evidently, Graham was related to the former U.S. secretary of state.⁷⁹ The architect of “constructive engagement” with apartheid South Africa during the 1980s – Chester Crocker – also had intimate ties with Rhodesia. His wife and in-laws hailed from this country. Interestingly, when he visited Rhodesia in 1979 – as the war still raged – he pointed out that President Jimmy Carter was concerned about losing African-American votes if he were not sufficiently tough with Rhodesia; “‘but,’” reminded Dr. Crocker, “‘we are a white majority government . . . not a black majority [government].’”⁸⁰ The implication was that a Republican party regime in Washington would seek to “constructively engage” the illegal minority regime rather than sanction it, in part because it was almost exclusively dependent on Euro-American – and not minority – voters.⁸¹

Crocker had a point. “Whiteness,” if not “white supremacy” was rarely distant from the machinations of U.S. opinion molders, even during a Cold War era when such racist thinking was officially renounced. The United States had been founded as a bastion of “white supremacy” and this principle had not been eradicated totally in the twentieth century, despite enormous domestic and – particularly – global opposition. There were many reasons for this, not least being the perceived profits that seemed to flow from a special exploitation of Africans particularly. Still, it would be a mistake to neglect the point that there were blood ties, family relations that bonded influential forces in the United States to their brethren across the Atlantic; leaders of these minority

75. Ian Smith, *The Great Betrayal: The Memoirs of Ian Douglas Smith* (London, 1997), 24, 202.

76. Juanita Roberts to Kevin Lee, 24 April 1966, Lyndon Baines Johnson Papers, National Security File, Country File, Rhodesia, box 97, Johnson Library, Austin, Texas.

77. A. R. W. Stumbles, *Some Recollections of a Rhodesian Speaker* (Bulawayo, 1980), 171.

78. Angus Graham to Dean Acheson, 1 July 1968, Acheson Papers, box 13.

79. Dean Acheson to Angus Graham, 23 July 1968, Acheson Papers, box 13.

80. *Sunday Mail* [Rhodesia], 10 June 1979.

81. Kevin Phillips, *The Emerging Republican Majority* (New Rochelle, 1969); Dan T. Carter, *From George Wallace to Newt Gingrich: Race and the Conservative Counter-Revolution, 1963–1994* (Baton Rouge, 1996).

regimes had a special call on the sentiments of Washington and this too helped to extend the operation of “white supremacy” as a principle of U.S. foreign policy. Similar to the beginning of the American Century, Africa was continuing to reinforce and reinvigorate “white supremacy” as this epoch was winding down.

For a good deal of the American Century, “race” was seen as a global concern with Japan rarely far from calculations about this concept. Tokyo had proved to be a nettlesome foreign policy concern for Washington, as the Pacific war amply demonstrated. With the Cold War, however, Japan became a U.S. ally and its ability to attract disgruntled African Americans searching for leverage against their own government virtually disappeared. Correspondingly, “race” was reduced to a domestic concern – or at most, a concern that implicated Africans generally.

Yet, Washington’s Cold War policy of anticommunism undercut the anti-racists of the left in Tokyo as it provided leverage to those Japanese who were the ideological descendants of the purveyors of prewar racist thinking, particularly “anti-white” thinking.⁸² When the Soviet Union collapsed, the adhesive that had bound many of the Japanese right – as well as many Chinese elites – to the United States eroded and what emerged was a troubling eruption of racist thinking.⁸³

Mahatir Mohamad, prime minister of Malaysia, was a direct beneficiary of the protracted Cold War campaign – spearheaded by London and assisted by Washington – that routed the left in his country.⁸⁴ Shintaro Ishihara, a leading Japanese conservative, was the kind of anticommunist that the United States smiled on during the Cold War. Recently they produced a volume that raises intriguing questions about the future of “race” – and “white supremacy” – in

82. Michael Schaller, *The American Occupation of Japan: The Origins of the Cold War in Asia* (New York, 1985); Myles I. C. Robertson, *Soviet Policy toward Japan: An Analysis of Trends in the 1970s and 1980s* (New York, 1988); Charles E. Zeigler, *Foreign Policy and East Asia: Learning and Adaptation in the Gorbachev Era* (New York, 1993).

83. Frank Dikotter, ed., *The Construction of Racial Identities in China and Japan* (Honolulu, 1997); Frank Dikotter, *The Discourse of Race in Modern China* (Stanford, 1992); Alf Hildebeitel and Barbara Miller, eds., *Hair in Asian Cultures: Context and Change* (Albany, 1997); Benjamin Schwartz, *In Search of Wealth and Power: Yen Fu and the West* (Cambridge, 1964); Yoshino Kosaku, *Cultural Nationalism in Japan* (London, 1992); Cullen T. Hayashida, “Identity, Race, and the Blood Ideology of Japan” (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1976). Despite the paucity of Jewish people in Japan, there has been a persistent strain of anti-Semitism in this nation and, to an extent, in the region we refer to as East Asia. See David G. Goodman and Masanori Miyazawa, *Jews in the Japanese Mind: The History and Uses of a Cultural Stereotype* (New York, 1995); David Kranzler, *Japanese, Nazis, and Jews: The Jewish Refugee Community in Shanghai, 1938–1945* (New York, 1976); James R. Ross, *Escape to Shanghai: A Jewish Community in China* (New York, 1994); and Ernest G. Heppner, *Shanghai Refugee: A Memoir of the World War II Jewish Ghetto* (Lincoln, 1993).

84. Robert Jackson, *The Malayan Emergency: The Commonwealth’s Wars, 1948–1966* (New York, 1991); Donald W. Hamilton, *The Art of Insurgency: American Military Policy and the Failure of Strategy in Southeast Asia* (New York, 1998); Edgar O’Ballance, *Malaya: The Communist Insurgent War, 1948–1960* (London, 1966); Richard Stubbs, *Hearts and Minds in Guerilla Warfare: The Malayan Emergency, 1948–1960* (New York, 1989); Robert Thompson, *Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam* (New York, 1966).

the twenty-first century. They approvingly cite “Lenin who said that European prosperity was based on exploiting the cheap labor and abundant resources of the colonies. When that rapacious plunder became impossible, the sun began to set on Europe. . . . Europe ‘surpassed’ Asia through plunder and exploitation.” “Western civilization” itself, they state, “was built on war.” This broad assertion includes the United States. “Europeans and Americans are still dreaming of past glory,” they suggest; they go on to warn that “Asians” – not just Japanese and Malaysians – “are fed up with the blustering and threats of American trade negotiators.” “Asia,” they warn, “presents a more serious threat to the West than even militaristic Japan did earlier this century.” With bluntness, they charge that the Gulf War was no more than another expression of white supremacy: “If the United States can get away with this – peddling arms throughout the Middle East, intervening militarily to protect its supply of oil, and arm-twisting Japan to foot the bill – then the white race still rules the world”; “it is impossible to communicate with Americans as well as we do with Asians,” they conclude. Why? “Color is one reason . . . the perception that white people are better than colored people.” They pointedly observe that it may “take a cataclysmic event” to “shake the great majority of Americans out of their hubris and self-righteousness” and suggest that “we may have to form an Asian united front against Americanization.” They raise the awesome specter of Genghis Khan, reminding how after he “extended the Mogol Empire to eastern Europe . . . Caucasians adopted Mongol-style haircuts and shaved eye-brows and even their bandy-legged gait.” They even echo the Afro-centrists in averring that “Jesus was a person of color, a fact that discomforts Caucasians when it is brought to their attention.”⁸⁵ Strikingly, this overt hostility to the United States – and particularly Euro-Americans – has not been abated by the financial crisis that has gripped Japan, Malaysia, and its neighbors but instead has seemed to spread.⁸⁶

Of course, unlike the pre-World War II era there is not – as of now – an identifiable constituency in the United States that would be willing to align with these Asian politicians, as the Black Nationalists of old once did. The Cold War took its toll on African Americans, forcibly reducing internationalist thinking in this community.⁸⁷ Yet, this community is reeling, as it has come to recognize that the civil rights concessions it received – particularly affirmative action – were heavily dependent on a Cold War dispensation that has evaporated, while newly minted racialists posit ever more sophisticated versions of “white supremacy.”⁸⁸ Thus, who is to say how U.S. minorities generally may

85. Mahatir Mohamad and Shintaro Ishihara, *The Voice of Asia: Two Leaders Discuss the Coming Century* (Tokyo, 1995), 22, 29, 53, 90, 98, 134.

86. *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 19 and 26 March and 2 April 1998.

87. See generally Gerald Horne, *Fire This Time: The Watts Uprising and the 1960s* (Charlottesville, 1995).

88. Gerald Horne, *Reversing Discrimination: The Case for Affirmative Action* (New York, 1992); Joe L. Kincheloe, Shirley R. Steinberg, and Aaron D. Gresson III, eds., *Measured Lies: The Bell Curve Examined* (New York, 1996).

react in the future to these more aggressive assertions of “white supremacy”? Perhaps U.S. minorities may feel compelled to align with “anti-white” Asians, just as some once aligned with Soviet Communists: the decline of the socialist project and the retreat of solidarity based on class makes such a prospect less far fetched than it may appear at first glance. Once again, the moment could be near to contemplate a forced “race” from elements of the “power” that white supremacy was thought to provide.

The brusque reassertion of racial thinking in Asia has emerged just as the United States finds that relations with both China⁸⁹ and Japan are not the best; it is strategically impractical to maintain prickly relations with both of these Asian giants simultaneously, though the bluntness of “white supremacy” makes it difficult to forge subtle distinctions between and among “non-whites.” Simultaneously, influential thinkers in this nation are warning of a “clash of civilizations” – warnings that bear an eerie resemblance to the racial maunderings of Lothrop Stoddard and Madison Grant in the early part of this American Century.⁹⁰ As ever, the contours of race in this nation will be shaped by developments in the global arena and, it appears, U.S. foreign policy will continue to be shaped by racial considerations.

It is difficult to predict where this uncertain situation may lead, but it is evident that we *are* experiencing the preliminary stages of a “general crisis of white supremacy” that may conclude with a fundamental reordering of concepts of “race” that – in a rudimentary sense – have been derived from “power.”⁹¹

89. See, for example, Michael Pillsbury, ed., *Chinese Views of Future Warfare* (Washington, 1997); Richard Bernstein and Ross H. Munro, *The Coming Conflict with China* (New York, 1997); Ezra Vogel, *Living with China: U.S.-China Relations in the 21st Century* (New York, 1997); Daniel Burstein and Arne De Keijzer, *Big Dragon: China's Future: What it Means for Business, the Economy, and the Global Order* (New York, 1998); Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl WuDunn, *China Wakes: The Struggle for the Soul of a Rising Power* (New York, 1995); Edward Gargan, *China's Fate: A People's Turbulent Struggle with Reform and Repression, 1980-1990* (New York, 1990); Kenneth Lieberthal, *Governing China: From Revolution through Reform* (New York, 1995).

90. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York, 1996).

91. See generally Peter Ratcliffe, ed., “Race,” *Ethnicity, and Nation: International Perspectives on Social Conflict* (London, 1994); Robert Miles, *Racism after “Race” Relations* (New York, 1993); and Anthony Marx, *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of the United States, South Africa, and Brazil* (New York, 1998).